

DRAFT

MEPA/NEPA/HB495 CHECKLIST

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. Type of Proposed State Action Grant an easement to Montana Power Company to install a 100-kilovolt Power transmission line within Missouri Headwaters State Park. Remove approximately 2 miles of an overhead 50-kilovolt transmission line, with the existing under built distribution line buried to a point terminating at the park entrance station and the picnic area.

2. Agency Authority for the Proposed Action MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks has the authority to grant an easement on Department lands (87-1-209 MCA).

3. Name of Project MPC – Three Rivers-Trident.

4. Name, Address and Phone Number of Project Sponsor (if other than the agency)
Ray Heagney
1400 S. 19th
Bozeman, MT 59718
406-994-6934

5. If Applicable:
Estimated Construction/Commencement Date March or April of 2000.

Estimated Completion Date May 2000.

Current Status of Project Design (% complete) 0%

6. Location Affected by Proposed Action (county, range and township)

Missouri Headwater State Park, Gallatin County, Range 2E., Township 2N.

7. Project Size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:

	Acres		Acres
(a) Developed:		(d) Floodplain	_____
residential	_____		
industrial	_____	(e) Productive:	
	1	irrigated cropland	_____
(b) Open Space/Woodlands/Recreation	_____	dry cropland	_____
		forestry	_____
(c) Wetlands/Riparian Areas	_____	rangeland	_____
		other	_____

8. Map/site plan: attach an original 8 1/2" x 11" or larger section of the most recent USGS 7.5' series topographic map showing the location and boundaries of the area that would be affected by the proposed action. A different map scale may be substituted if more appropriate or if required by agency rule. If available, a site plan should also be attached. **(See Attached)**

9. Listing of any other Local, State or Federal agency that has overlapping or additional jurisdiction.

(a) Permits:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>	<u>Date Filed/#</u>
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers		Pending
Montana Department of Natural Resource and Conservation		Pending

(b) Funding:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
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(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Type of Responsibility</u>
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10. Narrative summary of the proposed action or project including the benefits and purpose of the proposed action:

- ▶ Holnam Cement Plant is supported electrically by one 100 kV feed from the Three Rivers Substation to the Trident Auto Substation. The towns of Manhattan and Three Forks are currently fed from the Trident Auto Substation with a 50 kV line system. Installation of the second 100 kV line between the Three Rivers Substation and the Trident Auto Substation will increase the load capacity in the area. Reliability of service to the cement plant and the town of Manhattan will be enhanced by forestalling any outages should one of the 100 kV lines be rendered non-serviceable for any reason.
- ▶ Reliability of service to the Helena area will be enhanced as the Trident Auto Substation is tied to Helena by a 100 kV line. Should one of the 100 kV lines between Three Rivers Substation and Trident Auto Substation be removed from service for any reason, non-interrupted service to the Helena area can be maintained.

► Installation of this line in conjunction with the new lines and substation being installed in the Three Forks area will allow the elimination of the existing 50 kV feed from the Trident Auto Substation to Three Forks. When this 50 kV line is removed a substantial portion of the Headwaters State Park will be freed from encumbrance by an overhead electric transmission facility.

The proposed project would remove approximately 2 miles of an overhead 50-kilovolt transmission line, which extends along highway 286, through Missouri Headwater State Park. The underbuilt distribution line would then be buried to a point terminating at the park entrance station approximately 3,750 linear feet from the south end of the park boundary. This line would continue to service electrical needs at the entrance station and the park campground. This work would be conducted under an existing easement.

A second distribution line would be buried to a point terminating at the park picnic area approximately 2,000 linear feet from the northeast end of the park boundary. This line would continue to service electrical needs at the park picnic area.

A 100-kilovolt transmission line will be installed at the far northeast point of the park, near the Missouri River access (boat ramp) area.

11. List of agencies consulted during preparation of the EA:

State Historical Preservation Office
FWP, Design and Construction Bureau
FWP, Parks Division
FWP, Lands Bureau
FWP, Legal Unit
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

1. Evaluation of the impacts of the Proposed Action including secondary and cumulative impacts on the Physical and Human Environment.

A. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. LAND RESOURCES Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. **Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?		X				
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil which would reduce productivity or fertility?			X			See comment 1b. below
c. **Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?		X				
d. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		X				
f. Other: NONE						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

1b: Disturbed areas will be returned to as near as pre-construction contours as possible. MPC will complete seeding according to pre-approved seed mix.

- * Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- *** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- **** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

2. <u>AIR</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. **Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (also see 13 (c))			X			See comment 2a. below
b. Creation of objectionable odors?		X				
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		X				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		X				
e. ***For P-R/D-J projects, will the project result in any discharge, which will conflict with federal or state air quality regs? (Also see 2a)		X				
f. Other: NONE						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Air Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

2a: The primary source of air pollutants would be construction equipment. The quantities of air pollutants emitted during the short construction timeframe would be minimal.

- * Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- *** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- * Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

3. WATER Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated*	Comm Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. *Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity?		X				
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?		X				
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of floodwater or other flows?		X				
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding?		X				
f. Changes in the quality of groundwater?		X				
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?		X				
h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?		X				
i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?		X				
j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		X				
k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		X				
l. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect a designated floodplain? (Also see 3c)		X				
m. ***For P-R/D-J, will the project result in any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations? (Also see 3a)		X				
n. Other: NONE						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Water Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- * Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- *** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- **** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

4. <u>VEGETATION</u>	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be	Comment
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?			X		Mitigated *	Index See comment 4a. below
b. Alteration of a plant community?		X				
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		X				
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?		X				
f. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland?		X				
g. Other: NONE						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

4a. Re-seed disturbed ground with native grasses.

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

** 5. FISH/WILDLIFE Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment* Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		X				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		X				
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?		X				
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		X				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?			X			See comment 5e. below
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?		X				
h. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project be performed in any area in which T&E species are present, and will the project affect any T&E species or their habitat? (Also see 5f)		X				
i. ***For P-R/D-J, will the project introduce or export any species not presently or historically occurring in the receiving location? (Also see 5d)		X				
j. Other: NONE						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative needed):

5e: Bird flight diverters will be installed on the line to minimize bird collisions.

- * Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- *** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- **** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

B. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. <u>NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Increases in existing noise levels?		X	X			See comment 6a. below
b. Exposure of people to serve or nuisance noise levels?						
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		X				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		X				
e. Other: NONE						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

6a: Only small trenching equipment will be used to bury the underground distribution line. The other equipment used will be line trucks, pole truck, backhoes. Noise similar to road traffic.

7. <u>LAND USE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?		X				
b. Conflicted with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		X				
c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		X				
d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences?		X				
e. Other: NONE						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.

** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

8. <u>RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS</u>	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?		X				
b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan or create a need for a new plan?		X				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?		X				
d. ***For P-R/D-J, will any chemical toxicants be used? (Also see 8a)		X				
e. Other: NONE						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

9. <u>COMMUNITY IMPACT</u>	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		X				
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?		X				
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income?		X				
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?			X			See 9d below
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?		X				
f. Other : NONE						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

9d: Installation of a 100-kv power transmission line would provide efficient and effective electricity routing to area industry and local communities.

- * Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- *** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- **** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

10. PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Will the proposed action have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If any, specify:		X				
b. Will the proposed action have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues?		X				
c. Will the proposed action result in a need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?		X				
d. Will the proposed action result in increased used of any energy source?		X				
e. **Define projected revenue sources		X				
f. **Define projected maintenance costs.		X				
g. Other: NONE						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

** 11: AESTHETICS/RECREATION	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?			X			See 11a below
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?		X				
c. **Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings? (Attach Tourism Report)		X				
d. ***For P-R/D-J, will any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas be impacted? (Also see 11a, 11c)		X				
e. Other : NONE						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

11a: Removal of the 50kv overhead transmission line in the park will open the aesthetic view shed. Installation of a 100-kv transmission line at the northeast end of the park may detract from the view shed.

- * Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- * Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

12. CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. **Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric historic, or paleontological importance?		X				See Comments Below
b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values?		X				
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				
d. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect historic or cultural resources? Attach SHPO letter of clearance. (Also see 12.a)		X				
e. Other: NONE						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed): An intensive cultural survey was completed of the area of potential effect for this project. The conclusions from the survey are that no potential for cultural impacts exist. Montana Power Company will monitor the area of potential effect during project.

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

13. SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE	IMPACT *				Can Impact Be Mitigated *	Comment Index
	Unknown *	None	Minor *	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:						
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources that create a significant effect when considered together or in total.)		X				
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur?		X				
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan?		X				
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?		X				
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?		X				
f. ***For P-R/D-J, is the project expected to have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy? (Also see 13e)		X				
g. ****For P-R/D-J, list any federal or state permits required.		X				

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Water Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

- * Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or can not be evaluated.
- ** Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM)
- *** Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.
- **** Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW, CONTINUED

2. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:

ALTERNATIVE A - Preferred Option

Alternative A would allow under the existing easement the removal of a substantial portion of the 50-kv transmission line through the park and placing underground power lines to points in the park where electrical services are required. This alternative would require a new easement and approval from the Fish, Wildlife and Parks Commission for the placement of an overhead 100-kv transmission line at the northeast boundary of the park.

ALTERNATIVE B - NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Implementation of Alternative B would involve the continued reliance on the existing power transmission line through the park. Deny Montana Power Company permission to redesign or install transmission lines or services within the park.

3. Evaluation and listing of mitigation, stipulation, or other control measures enforceable by the agency or another government agency:

Montana Power will mitigate the minor impacts of 1b and 4a of the EA checklist. Prior to construction MPC will conduct a pre-weed inventory of the project area to document existing weeds in the area. MPC will then consult with FWP to determine the need for any noxious weed control measures. The area will be restored to as near as pre-construction contours and re-seeded with an approved seed mix.

PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

An intensive cultural survey was completed of the area of potential effect for this project. The conclusions from the survey were that a potential for cultural impacts does not exist. The proposed project would enhance the overall esthetics of Missouri Headwaters State Park.

PART IV. EA CONCLUSION SECTION

1. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required (YES/NO)? If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action.

No further analysis is necessary due to the nature and lack of any significant impacts from the project presented in this EA.

2. Describe the level of public involvement for this project if any and, given the complexity and the seriousness of the environmental issues associated with the proposed action, is the level of public involvement appropriate under the circumstances?

Public announcements through local newspapers will be made in accordance to MEPA guidelines. Legal notices will be published in the newspapers listed below requesting public comment. A mailing of the draft EA will be made to individual registered to receive agency MEPA documents.

News Papers: Bozeman Daily Chronicle
Independent Record
Three Forks Herald

State Electronic Bulletin Board

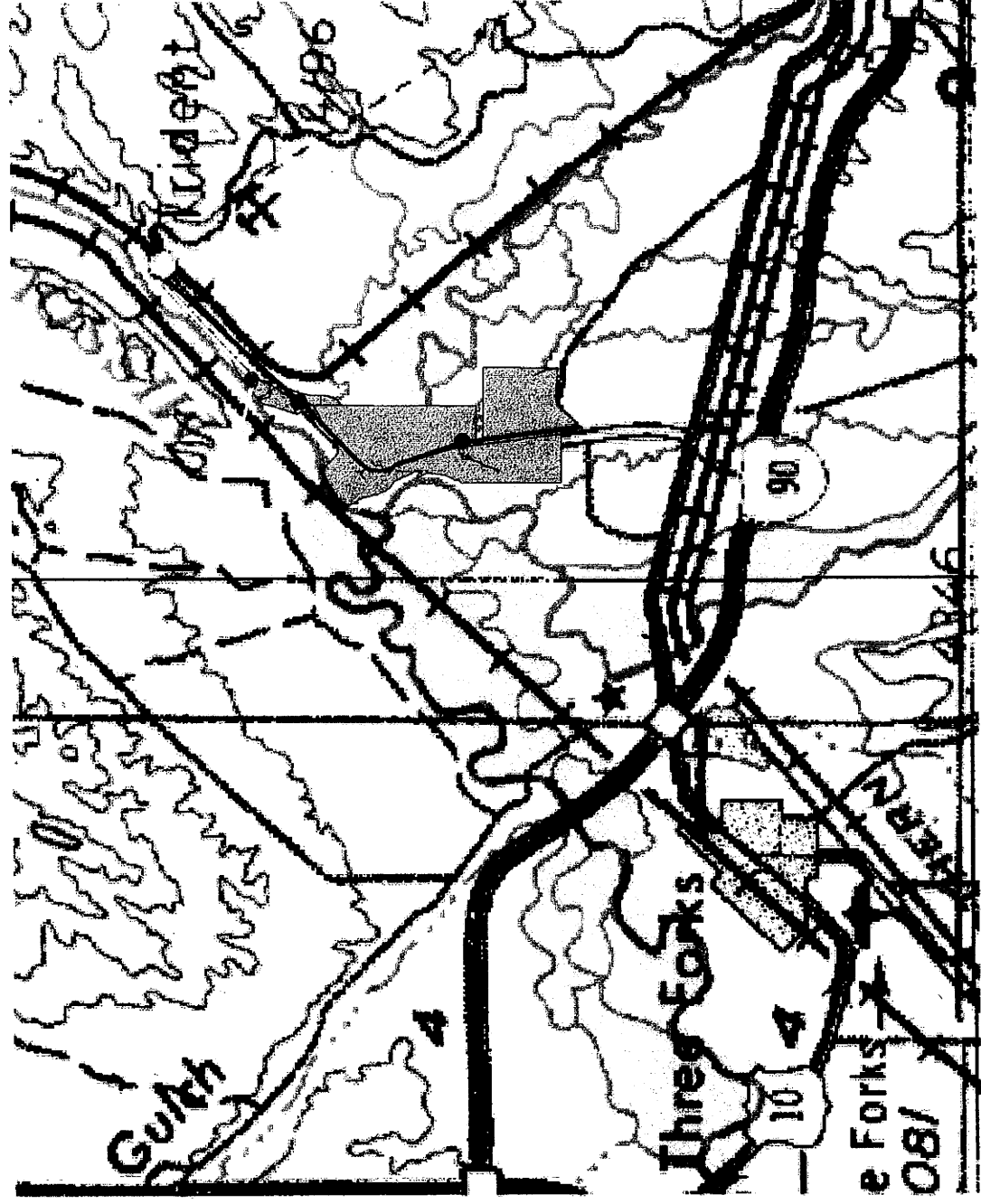
3. Duration of comment period, if any.


A sixteen-day public comment period starting March 9, 2000 to 5 PM, March 24, 2000.

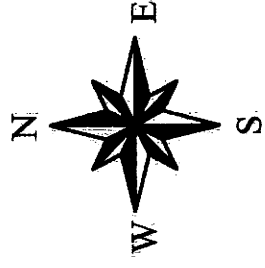
4. Name, title, address and phone number of the person(s) responsible for preparing the EA:

Ray Heagney
Parks Operations Specialist
1400 S. 19th
Bozeman, MT 59718
406-994-6934

Montana Power Company Three Rivers / Trident Project



- Proposed 100kv tower placement
 - Entrance station termination
 - Picnic termination point
 - Proposed 100kv distribution line
 - Removed powerline
 - Powerlines to be buried.
 - Internal park roads.
- 
- Missouri Headwaters State Park



DRAFT
HB495 EXEMPTION FORM

Use this form when a park improvement or development project meets the criteria identified in 12.8.602 (1) ARM, but determined to NOT significantly change park features or use patterns.

State Park or Fishing Access Site Project Description:

Montana Power Company's – Three Rivers / Trident Easement

The improvement or development project does not significantly change park or fishing access site features or use patterns. Provide the reason for exemption across from the appropriate item.

12.8.602 (ARM) (1)	Reason for Exemption
(a) Roads/trails	
(b) Buildings	
(c) Excavation	
(d) Parking	
(e) Shoreline alternations	
(f) Construction into water bodies	
(g) Construction w/impacts on cultural artifacts	
(h) Underground utilities	Montana Power Company will remove approximately 2 miles of an overhead 50-kilovolt transmission lines through Missouri Headwaters State Park. This existing underbuilt distribution line would then be buried to a point terminating at the park entrance station approximately 3,750 linear feet from the south end of the park boundary. A second distribution line will be buried to a point terminating at the park picnic area approximately 2,000 linear feet from the northeast end of the park boundary. These lines will continue to service electrical needs at the entrance station park campground and the picnic area <u>under the existing easement</u> . Impacts are expected to be negligible cause from trench within the line corridor.
(i) Campground expansion	

Some activities considered that do not significantly impact site features or use patterns are:

- Signing, fencing, barriers, road grading, garbage collection, routine latrine and facility maintenance.

Signature  Date 2/3/00

c: Helena HB 495 Coordinator
Regional Park Manager



Legacy Consulting Services

403 West Quartz Street
Butte, Montana 59701-9156 USA

406-782-5663 (voice) • 406-723-7001 (FAX) • jjs@in-tch.com (electronic mail)

February 10, 2000

FEB 18 2000

Mr. Paul Valle
Cultural Resource Specialist
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Field Services Division
Capital Station
Post Office Box 200701
Helena, Montana 59620

re: Missouri Headwaters State Park: 12.5 kV , 50kV and 100 kV Transmission Lines Project

Dear Mr. Valle:

As we have discussed, The Montana Power Company (MPC) is proposing to conduct the referenced project, over the Headwaters State Park, in the vicinity of Three Forks, Montana. The project would consist of the removal of an existing, 50kV overhead transmission line, and replacement of that line with an underground 12.5 kV distribution line in the same right-of-way as the existing overhead line. In addition, one structure of a new, 100kV transmission line would be located in the park, in the area of the boat launch. Legacy Consulting Services (LCS) is representing MPC for Cultural Resource Management consultations on this project.

An on-site, cultural resource inventory of the corridors for the proposed 12.5 kV and 100kV line installations and 50 kV line removal was conducted by Renewable Technologies, Incorporated (RTI). Copies of the RTI report are enclosed. In summary, the RTI inventory identified no cultural properties within the line corridors, which they evaluated as eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Under the provisions of the Montana Antiquities Act none of the identified properties would qualify as Montana Heritage Properties.¹ The area of Headwaters State Park, has previously been listed as a National Historic Landmark, for the association of the area with the Lewis and Clark Expedition. However, none of the elements described in the landmark nomination would be effected by the proposed project, inasmuch as none are located within either of the line corridors. There are however, other cultural properties, located in the vicinity of the corridor for installation of the 12.5 kV line which would qualify for NRHP listing and as Montana Heritage Properties. These properties are described in detail in the RTI report.

LCS has reviewed the RTI report, as regards the need for any additional CRM studies for the referenced project. The RTI inventory identified an area containing a vegetative anomaly, of unknown origin, located within the existing 50kV line corridor. Also, the RTI inventory recorded a prehistoric rock art property and the marked graves of historic-era settlers in the area. Information on file with the Montana Department of Fish Wildlife and Parks (FWP) , also identifies the location of the historic settlement of Gallatin City, adjacent to the existing 50kV line corridor.

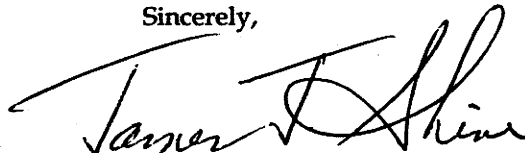
¹ 22-3-421(4) MCA

It is possible that the vegetative anomaly recorded by RTI, represents the location of an historic building or structure, which may or may not be associated with the historic settlement of Gallatin City. The historic record of Gallatin City, as maintained by FWP, does not suggest a strong probability of any association between this anomaly and Gallatin City. However, that record also does not rule out the possibility of such an association. Furthermore, while the marked historic graves are located outside the existing 50kV line corridor; it is possible that unrecorded, historic graves may be located within that corridor. The ground surface in this area of the corridor is obscured by moderate to heavy ground cover, thereby precluding the identification of surface indications of such grave sites. Given these factors, MPC is proposing the following management plan for construction of the proposed 12.5 kV underground installation.

The line will be buried underground, within a trench, approximately 18 inches wide and 30 inches deep. MPC proposes to sponsor on-site monitoring of the installation of the underground line. Monitoring would be conducted by a qualified cultural resource professional. For any archaeological remains located in the monitoring, the trenching for installation would be halted, until the Monitor was able to explore and record the remains identified in monitoring. The work would then proceed to completion. After completion of the installation, MPC would sponsor any archaeological testing necessary to determine if the archaeological resources identified in monitoring were of sufficient significance and integrity to warrant eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places. If the archaeological resource were found to be eligible for listing, then MPC would sponsor appropriate archaeological data recovery over the area of the identified archaeological property, as mitigation for effects to that property, associated with installation of the underground line. In the case of the discovery of any human remains during monitoring; all work would be halted, and the provisions of the Montana Burial Sites Protection Act.² No additional work would be conducted, within 300 feet of the point of the discovery of such human remains, until the provisions of the burial protection act were implemented. LCS believes that this is the most appropriate management plan, considering the results of the resource inventory of the proposed line corridors.

Please review the enclosed report and the above management plan. In order that the project can proceed in a timely manner, please provide me your comments on these matters on or before March 10, 2000. If it will facilitate the process, please address your comments to me at my electronic mail address (jjs@in-tch.com). Your comments would be addressed as necessary, and submitted with the appropriate permit materials to the FWP for overall review. Please call me at 406-782-5663, should you have any questions on this matter.

Sincerely,



James J. Shive
Cultural Resource Manager

enclosure

cc: R. P. Walsh, MPC w/enclosure

² 22-3-802, *et. seq.* MCA

FEB 1 1993

MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (MEPA)/HB 495
TOURISM REPORT

The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and parks has initiated the review process as mandated by HB495 and the Montana Environmental Policy Act in tis consideration of the project described below. As part of the review process, input and comments are being solicited. Please complete the project name and project description portions and submit this form to:

Victor Bjornberg, Tourism Development
Montana Promotion Division
Department of Commerce
1424 9th Avenue
Helena, MT 59620-0533

Project Name Montana Power Company – Three Rivers / Trident Easement

Project Description

- ▶ Holnam Cement Plant is supported electrically by one 100 kV feed from the Three Rivers Substation to the Trident Auto Substation. The towns of Manhattan and Three Forks are currently fed from the Trident Auto Substation with a 50 kV line system. Installation of the second 100 kV line between the Three Rivers Substation and the Trident Auto Substation will increase the load capacity in the area. Reliability of service to the cement plant and the town of Manhattan will be enhanced by forestalling any outages should one of the 100 kV lines be rendered non-serviceable for any reason.
- ▶ Reliability of service to the Helena area will be enhanced as the Trident Auto Substation is tied to Helena by a 100 kV line. Should one of the 100 kV lines between Three Rivers Substation and Trident Auto Substation be removed from service for any reason, non-interrupted service to the Helena area can be maintained.
- ▶ Installation of this line in conjunction with the new lines and substation being installed in the Three Forks area will allow the elimination of the existing 50 kV feed from the Trident Auto Substation to Three Forks. When this 50 kV line is removed a substantial portion of the Headwaters State Park will be freed from encumbrance by an overhead electric transmission facility.

The proposed project would remove approximately 2 miles of a overhead 50-kilovolt transmission line, which extends along highway 286, through Missouri Headwater State Park. The underbuilt distribution line would then be buried to a point terminating at the park entrance station approximately 3,750 Linear feet from the south end of the park boundary. This line would continue to service electrical needs at the entrance station and the park campground.

A second distribution line would be buried to a point terminating at the park picnic area approximately 2,000 Linear feet from the northeast end of the park boundary. This line would continue to service electrical needs at the park picnic area.

A 100 kilovolt transmission line will be installed at the far northeast point of the park, near the Missouri River access (boat ramp) area.

1. Would this site development project have a impact on the tourism economy?

☐ NO

☒ Yes

If YES, briefly describe:

The proposed project should improve the aesthetics of Headwaters State Park through the removal of the overhead power lines. This is a good first step in improving the views of surrounding landscapes visitors can view from the park.

2. Does this impending improvement alter the quality or quantity of recreation/tourism opportunities and settings?

☐ NO

☒ Yes

If YES, briefly describe:

The quality of the visitor experience should be improved by this project.

Signature

Vicki Bjornberg

Date

Feb 18, 2000